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Clinton tries to turn volunteering into “forced labor,” charges Libertarian Party

In radio address, president suggests mandatory community service

WASHINGTON, DC — President Clinton likes volunteering so much he wants to make it *mandatory* for millions of young people, the Libertarian Party said today.

“Bill Clinton is taking the voluntary out of volunteering,” said Steve Dasbach, Libertarian Party chairman. “He wants to turn volunteers into forced government labor.”

In his radio address this weekend, Clinton urged state governments to follow the lead of Maryland, which requires “community service” for high school graduation. Clinton suggested that such mandated volunteering would teach young Americans “the joy and duty of serving.”

“Nonsense,” countered Dasbach. “What this forced labor will teach young people is that their desire to help their neighbors has been corrupted into another government program.”

Just in case mandating service doesn’t work, Clinton also proposed in his radio address to pay “volunteers.” He announced the federal government will hand out \$500 checks to students who “performed outstanding service.”

“Clinton can’t grasp the notion that Americans don’t need to be bribed or blackmailed into volunteering, said Dasbach. “People volunteer out of a genuine urge to help other people. Volunteering is the highest tribute to the American spirit of cooperation and compassion.”

It’s also an important part of the nation’s civic landscape. According to a 1993 survey, 48% of Americans volunteer every year — a whopping 80 million adults. In all, Americans contribute 19.5 billion hours of annual voluntary service.

“But the government doesn’t control those 80 million volunteers,” said Dasbach. “So Clinton comes up with a typical politician’s response: If something is good, *mandate* it or *subsidize* it.

“Websters New World Dictionary defines a volunteer as ‘one who offers to enter into service of his own free will.’ Bill Clinton’s dictionary defines a volunteer as ‘one who must be forced to serve — or else he won’t get a high school diploma or a paycheck,’ ” said Dasbach.

“Thanks to Clinton, the noble American tradition of volunteering — millions of individuals who generously give of their time, talent, and spirit — has been turned into another expensive government program, financed by taxpayers and controlled by government bureaucrats.

“And thanks to Clinton, *mandatory, paid volunteering* now joins the long list of Washington, DC oxymorons — alongside voluntary income tax compliance, Social Security Trust Fund, and an honest politician.”

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